








# KANSAS SUPREME COURT

Justices							
Confidence Score	Mild Republican	Indeterminate	Mild Republican	Strong Republican	Indeterminate	Mild Republican	Indeterminate
Opinion Partners		✓			✓		
Dissenting Minority							
Determining Majority	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lone Dissenter		✓					

## SUMMARY

- ▶ Number of justices: **7 (two vacancies throughout 2020)**
- ▶ Number of cases: **120**
- ▶ Percentage of cases with a unanimous ruling: **90.0% (108)**
- ▶ Justice most often writing the majority opinion: **Justice Daniel Biles (20)**
- ▶ Per curiam decisions: **17**
- ▶ Concurring opinions: **16**
- ▶ Justice with most concurring opinions: **Justice Caleb Stegall (5)**
- ▶ Dissenting opinions: **13**
- ▶ Justice with most dissenting opinions: **Justice Daniel Biles (5)**

## COURT CONTENTION

### Opinion partners

In 2020, the Kansas Supreme Court decided five cases 5-2. Justices Beier and Rosen were opinion partners in two of those cases. Justice Biles and Rosen were opinion partners in one of those cases and allied in dissent in one split decision. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justices Beier, Biles, and Rosen each recorded a Mild Democratic Confidence Score.

### Dissenting minority

In 2020, two cases before the Kansas Supreme Court were decided by split decision. Justices Stegall and Biles were in the dissent in both of those cases. They were joined once by Justice Rosen and once by Justice Luckert. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justice Biles recorded a Mild Democratic Confidence Score, Justice Luckert recorded a Mild Republican Confidence Score, Justice Rosen recorded a Mild Democratic Confidence Score, and Justice Stegall recorded a Strong Republican Confidence Score.

### **Determining majority**

In the two cases decided by split decision in 2020, Justice Beier was the only justice in the majority in both cases. Because of vacancies throughout the year it is not possible to discern a determining majority on the court.

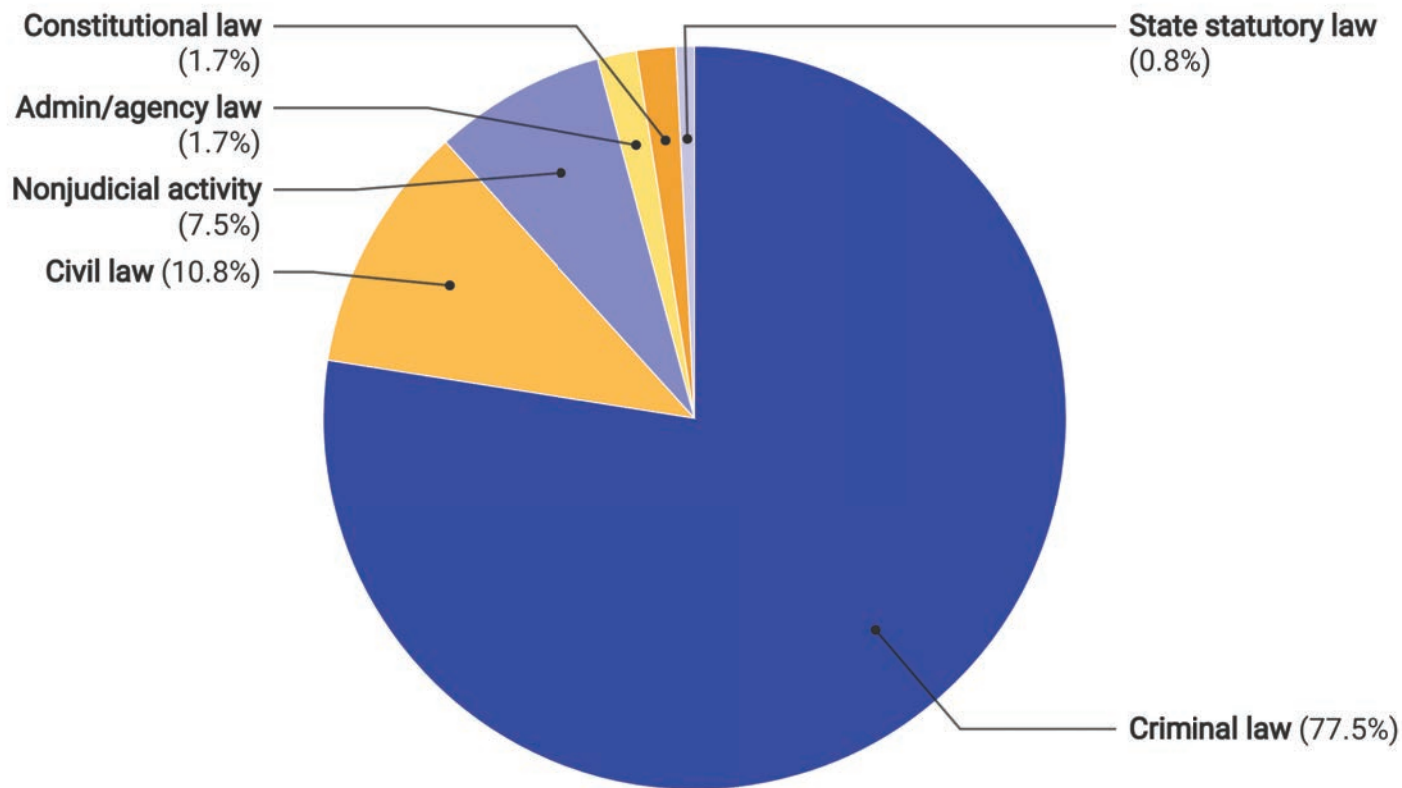
### **Lone dissenter**

In 2020, five cases before the Kansas Supreme Court were decided 6-1. Justice Stegall was a lone dissenter in three of those cases, which was more frequently than any of his colleagues. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justice Stegall recorded a Strong Republican Confidence Score.

## **COURT JURISDICTION**

The Kansas Supreme Court has mandatory jurisdiction in the following types of cases, according to the now-defunct American Judicature Society: “civil, criminal, administrative agency, disciplinary, certified questions from federal courts, original proceeding cases.” It has discretionary jurisdiction in the following types of cases: “civil, criminal, administrative agency, juvenile, original proceeding, and interlocutory decision cases.”

## Case types decided by Kansas Supreme Court, 2020



**BALLOT**PEDIA

The most common case category heard by the Kansas Supreme Court in 2020 was criminal law. Of the 120 cases it heard, 93 were criminal cases, or 77.5 percent of its total caseload for the year. A criminal case involves a final criminal appeal before the court of last resort.

The second most common cases that reached the supreme court were civil law. A civil case is one that involves a dispute between two parties, one of whom seeks reparations or damages. The Kansas Supreme Court heard 13 civil cases in 2020, or 10.8 percent of its total caseload for the year.

The third most common cases that reached the court were nonjudicial activity cases. A case is considered nonjudicial activity if it does not involve a formal hearing and discussion before the court. The Kansas Supreme Court heard nine nonjudicial activity cases in 2020, or 7.5 percent of its total caseload for the year.